



NEWS RELEASE

United States Department of Agriculture • Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service • Legislative and Public Affairs
4700 River Road, Riverdale, MD 20737-1232 • Voice (301) 734-7799 • Web: <http://www.aphis.usda.gov>

Karen Eggert (202) 690-4178
Angela Harless (202) 720-4623

USDA ANNOUNCES ADDED FUNDING TO CONTROL CATTLE FEVER TICK

WASHINGTON, March 19, 2008—The U.S. Department of Agriculture's Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) will make an additional \$5.2 million available to control outbreaks of cattle fever ticks occurring outside a permanent quarantine zone between Texas and Mexico.

"We will work aggressively to stop the spread of the cattle fever tick and remove it," said Bruce Knight, undersecretary for USDA's marketing and regulatory programs mission area.

Although cattle fever-tick outbreaks do occur in a quarantine zone, the number of outbreaks within the zone has recently increased. Of greatest concern are outbreaks outside the quarantine zone, but APHIS has drawn additional quarantine areas to control these outbreaks.

Additional funding will provide more people, surveillance, training and treatments to ensure the containment and early detection of new infestations. More mounted inspectors will patrol against livestock harboring ticks crossing into Texas from Mexico. Additional animal health technicians will control outbreaks and surveillance outside the permanent quarantine zone.

The increase in outbreaks may be caused by any of the following factors:

- a rise in ticks being transported across the Rio Grande River by wildlife, stray livestock or livestock illicitly moved into the United States;
- weather patterns and rainfall amounts that favor tick survival;
- movement of cattle from infested pastures to non-infested areas where ticks may infest and spread through wildlife;
- discovery of cattle fever ticks resistant to a variety of pesticides.

Cattle fever ticks are capable of carrying and transmitting bovine babesiosis, a protozoal disease. Since 1943, both cattle fever ticks and bovine babesiosis have been eradicated from the United States, except for a permanent quarantine zone that was established in 1938 along the Rio Grande River in south Texas. Bovine babesiosis has caused significant economic damage to the U.S. cattle industry in the past through production losses and high mortality.

APHIS regulates the importation of animals and animal products into the United States to prevent the introduction and dissemination of animal diseases and pests. To protect American livestock, all cattle from Mexico must be inspected individually at APHIS-approved facilities on the Mexican side of the border and be certified free of ticks. Cattle with ticks must be dipped in a solution to kill the parasites, quarantined and re-inspected. This process is repeated if additional ticks are found.

Note to Reporters: USDA news releases, program announcements and media advisories are available on the Internet. Go to the APHIS news release page at <http://www.aphis.usda.gov/newsroom>. Also, anyone with an e-mail address can sign up to receive APHIS press releases automatically. Send an e-mail message to lyris@mdrdlyriss10.aphis.usda.gov and leave the subject blank. In the message, type subscribe press_releases.